

George Boggess, U.S. Army Veteran, 1942 – 1946



Army Veteran George Boggess is a man whose character has truly stood the test time. Celebrating his 102nd birthday on February 17, 2014, he is the oldest male resident of the Washington DC VA Medical Center's Community Living Center.

Originally from Waco, Texas, Boggess moved to Washington D.C. in the fall of 1936, and hasn't looked back since. He was drafted into the U.S. Army in 1942. That same year, he married Dorothy Marks, who is still by his side over seven decades later.

Boggess was promoted to the rank of warrant officer in 1944, spending time at Fort Myer, Fort Meade, Camps Kilmer and Fort Dix, N.J., before being deployed to help fight the war in Europe. Serving in England, France, Luxembourg and Germany, he was eventually stationed in the Belgium Forest during the German's final assault at the "Battle of the Bulge."

During this conflict, Boggess was hit by enemy fire and wounded in his right knee, yet was right back on the battle field only a couple of weeks later. Nonetheless, his resilience did not go unnoticed – Boggess received the Purple Heart for being injured in the line of duty, as well as the Silver Star for gallantry in action against an enemy of the United States.

Growing up in Texas, Boggess was no stranger to discrimination. For him, segregation was a way of life. "I had no choice but to go to a black school...it was all I knew", he remembers. Even in the face of adversity, Boggess continued to progress, earning his Masters in Social Work from Howard University and working for the government until retirement.

An avid supporter of civil rights, Boggess participated in several marches and was present for Martin Luther King's "I Have A Dream" speech. When asked about the current state of African Americans in today's society, he admits: "Generally speaking, it's better. In theory, we can live where we want. In theory, we can work where we want. In theory, we can go where we want. But there's still so much to be done, especially for our young people."

So what's Boggess' secret to living a long life? "Walking!" he declares, "'Walking is man's best medicine."